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Contact: [Melissa J. Eddy](mailto:Melissa.J.Eddy@conspirare.org), 512-476-5775 (o), 512-217-1264 (c)

Conspirare presents

“Conspirare Christmas” at the Long Center

Monday, December 5, 8:00 p.m.

Long Center for the Performing Arts, 701 W. Riverside Dr., Austin

Tickets \$25-75

Call for student and group prices.

512-474-5664 or www.conspirare.org

Conspirare Holiday Gala dinner/after-party package sold separately; call 476-5775 for information

Five-time Grammy®-nominated Conspirare performs the eighteenth annual edition of its incomparable holiday concert. Always magical, always unique, “Conspirare Christmas” features artistic director Craig Hella Johnson’s renowned “collage” programming that melds music of many centuries and styles into one intensely meaningful whole.

The exquisite artistry of Conspirare’s professional singers is complemented by three guest artists who are long-time Conspirare collaborators: sparkling soprano and Austin favorite **Mela Dailey**, Seattle-based singer-songwriter **Matt Alber**, and percussionist **Tom Burritt**, recently named “Best of Austin” by the Austin Chronicle.

“Conspirare Christmas” is one of Austin’s most popular holiday experiences. Performances at its original venue The Carillon on Exposition – an intimate chapel-like space – always sell out early; this year’s performances at that venue were sold out by mid-October. The Long Center performance on December 5 enables a larger audience to experience the world-class artistic quality and unique programming of Conspirare’s holiday concert, at a range of ticket prices to fit every budget.

“Conspirare Christmas” and the Holiday Gala are sponsored by season sustaining underwriter South Texas Money Management.

About the Guest Artists

Mela Dailey

As the winner of competitions sponsored by the National Federation of Music Clubs, Metropolitan Opera, New York University, Gerda Lissner Foundation, Downbeat Magazine, and Connecticut Opera Guild, and finalist in the Metropolitan Opera Mid-South Region, International Opera Singer Competition, and Career Bridges Grant Awards with the Schuyler Foundation for Career Bridges, Inc., Mela (mee-la) Dailey has command of both her instrument and the stage. Ms. Dailey has received recognition in a wide variety of musical genres including opera, oratorio, art song, musical theater, vocal jazz, gospel, country, and popular music. Mela sang the role of Tina in Jonathan Dove's opera Flight with Austin Lyric Opera in April 2011. She also took part in a jazz concert in Klagenfurt, Austria and made her debut with the Dallas Wind Symphony, Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, and the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. At the Georgetown (TX) Festival of the Arts she sang Brahms’ German Requiem and performed several concerts around the US with cellist Scott Kluksdahl beginning with the Helps Festival of Music in Tampa. In the fall of 2011 Mela performed and recorded a Samuel Barber choral program with Conspirare for the Harmonia Mundi label and was soloist in Rossini’s Petite Messe Solenne with Chorus Austin. 2012 begins with a Conspirare Mid-Western Tour, solo debuts with the Spokane and Edmonton Symphonies, a Florida chamber music tour, and solos in Debussy’s *La damoiselle élue* and Poulenc’s Gloria in a return to the Georgetown Festival. More at www.meladailey.com.

Matt Alber

Seattle-based singer/songwriter Matt Alber first befriended Conspirare's artistic director Craig Hella Johnson at an audition in 1998 – one that would forever change the course of his journey. Craig invited Matt to San Francisco to join ranks with a *cappella* chamber ensemble *Chanticleer*, with whom Matt recorded two Grammy® -winning albums. Matt released his first collection of solo art/pop songs entitled *Hide Nothing* in 2008 and began to meet an audience through his 1960's-themed music video for the accompanying single, *End Of The World* (www.youtube.com/mattalber.) Matt is currently celebrating the release of a second full-length album entitled *Constant Crows*, recorded on the hauntingly beautiful island of Vashon in Puget Sound. He is overjoyed to be singing once again with Conspirare and with his beloved mentor and friend, Craig. For more information about Matt's music and tours, visit www.mattalber.com.

Thomas Burritt

Thomas Burritt received degrees from Ithaca College School of Music (BM – Education and Performance), Kent State University (MM), and Northwestern University (DMA). Active in the performance of new music for percussion Burritt has built a reputation in chamber music, as a percussion soloist and a concert marimbist. He has performed regularly at the Leigh Howard Stevens International Marimba Seminar and most recently was a featured faculty performer at the 2007 Zeltsman Marimba Festival. In April 2004 Burritt performed in Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall as member of the Hammers and Sticks Ensemble. Later the same year the Hammers and Sticks Ensemble released a CD on the Innova label featuring works by Steven Mackey, Zhou Long, Alvin Singleton, Alex Shapiro, Joseph Harchanko and Belinda Reynolds. As a percussion soloist Burritt has been active performing percussion concertos by Steve Mackey, Joseph Schwantner, Michael Dougherty, David Maslanka and James MacMillan. Burritt has recorded for guitarist Eric Johnson and recording artist David Byrne. Burritt's first solo CD recording: *All Times Identical - New American Music for Marimba* was released in November 2006 and is available at GoFishmusic.com. He is currently Associate Professor of Percussion and Director of Percussion Studies at the University of Texas at Austin and is a clinician for LLC/Mallettech Instruments, Mallettech Mallets and Zildjian Cymbals. For regular updates and other related information visit/subscribe to his video blog at www.thomasburritt.com.